



COMPLAINT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE

Compliance with the Policy Directive and Procedure is **Mandatory**

Pages: 5

| Procedure Type | Clinical Procedure Document |
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| <p>Purpose of the Procedure</p> | <p>The Department of Health and Aging – Aged Care Complaints Scheme which forms a part of the Aged Care Funding Agreement for Commonwealth HACC Service providers requires service providers to provide an effective process for receiving and addressing complaints. Service providers need to use a complaint mechanism to achieve the best outcome for clients and to identify options for Quality Improvement ¹.</p> <p>To provide an appropriate process for to assist service providers with the timely and effective management of complaints.</p> <p>To establish a standard approach to complaint handling which supports best practice, and is resolved within the organisation - Care Assess.</p> <p>To ensure that Care Assess staff and Subcontractors are aware of their responsibilities and are empowered to manage complaints.</p> |
| <p>Definitions</p> | <p>Complaint The definition of a complaint (which is consistent with Australian Standard ISO 10002-2006) is an:</p> <p><i>Expression of dissatisfaction made to Care Assess, related to its products (including services), or the complaints-handling process itself, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected¹.</i></p> <p>Complainant is: Means a person who provides information or raises a concern about the care and/or services being provided to a care recipient receiving Australian government subsidised aged care services ².</p> <p>Primary Subcontractor Means a contractor which is subcontracted to Care Assess to perform part of Care Assess’s obligations under the Aged Care Funding Agreement.</p> |

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| Procedure | <p>Principles</p> <p>The Care Assess Procedure for Complaint Management is underpinned by the guiding principles of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1- Care Assess is committed to Quality Improvement Processes. 2- Clients, carers their advocates and others are encouraged and enabled to provide feedback, including complaints, this can be done anonymously. 3- All complaints are acknowledged and the response is prompt and sensitive. 4- All complaints are assessed by considering the risks and known facts. 5- All complaints are dealt with effectively, completely and fairly for all parties involved. 6- Privacy and confidentiality is protected. 7- All complaints are recorded on the Complaints Register. 8- All Policy and Procedures relating to complaints have regular reviews documented as part of the Quality Improvement Cycle. 9- Clients and their representative (s) may raise a complaint with the Commonwealth Complaints Scheme before coming to Care Assess. These will usually be referred back to Care Assess dependant on the nature of the complaint ³. <p>Procedure</p> <p>Receiving Complaints</p> <p>Care Assess staff may receive a complaint from the client, carers or responsible person either in writing or verbally in person or via the telephone. Some complaints may be referred from the Complaints Scheme to be dealt with at a service provider level.</p> <p>With Complaints received Verbally Staff should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calmly explain what happened and why it happened • Explain how Care Assess deals with complaints • If appropriate offer an apology • If not involved direct the complainant to the relevant staff member • Offer to speak to the relevant staff member on behalf of the complainant • Document the complaint comprehensively • Advise the complainant of who to send any written concerns to. <p>Registration and Acknowledgment Complaints</p> <p>As soon as the complaint is received</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform a member of the Management Team. |
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- Register the complaint on the Complaint Form and/or Incident / Accident Form (Appendix 1)
- The complaint is to be acknowledged in writing within 5 working days;
 - Explaining the complaints process,
 - Identification of the Management Contact Person,
 - Outline timeframes to the complainant.

Initial Complaint Assessment

- Assess the complaint
- Rate the complaint using the Complaint Rating Scale This will assist in determination of who deals with the complaint (Appendix 2).
- Identify and document the issues.
- Identify and document the parties involved.
- Ensure a natural justice position for all staff concerned.
- Obtain any Authorities from the Client as required (Appendix 3) ³.

Investigate the Complaint

Determine:

- Who was involved?
- What happened?
- How to obtain the information required; Interview, phone call, statement, site visit or email.
- Construct a flow chart of events.
- Special Needs Clients – Interpreter for example.
- Policy Breaches

Analyse the Complaint

- Identify the facts that are agreed upon and the facts that are in dispute.
- Consider the reliability of the information.

Respond the Complaint

To be completed only after the information has been analysed.

Options:

- Apology – either verbally or in writing.
- Waiving fees.
- Amend a policy or procedure.
- Education and Training of staff.
- Modification of the environment.
- Request a more formal independent review.
- Ongoing monitoring of the issue.
- No Action

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| Supplementary Procedure | <p>Final Response – Resolution</p> <p>The Final Resolution Target is 35 Calendar Days.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apology – Not necessarily accepting blame or fault. • Address all points the complainant has raised with a full explanation to each point. • Provide the details of the investigation. • Outline the actions following the complaint. • Provide and Invitation to meet for any further clarification of the investigation and actions arising from the complaint. <p>VHC Complaints Procedure</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It is anticipated that the majority of issues/minor complaints from Veterans will be resolved by coordinators. 2. All complaints are to be added as a note in the database 3. To ensure consistency of delivery and there minimisation of complaints it is vital that all coordinators follow the Veterans Home Care Guidelines in providing support to veterans 4. In the situation that a coordinator feels that they are unable to fully resolve an issue the following process is to be followed: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. VHC coordinator to conclude conversation with Veteran, whilst advising the veteran that they will seek advice/clarification from their manager. b. This has a three-fold effect: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Allows the coordinator time to consult with colleagues and their manager ii. Diffuses the situation as the veteran has time to reflect iii. Reassures veteran that their complaint is being taken seriously. 5. Care Assess manager uses VHC Guidelines to ensure that correct process is being followed, and contacts veteran in attempt to reassure them and resolve the situation 6. In the event that this is unsuccessful, Care Assess manager may either: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Contact DVA Assessment Agency Manager for clarification or a workaround, or b. Provide the Veteran with the 133 254 DVA complaints number. 7. All complaints are to be recorded in the Veterans Complaints Register (on the “S” Drive) |
| Scope | <p>Category of Staff</p> <p>Care Assess Directors.</p> <p>Care Assess CEO.</p> |

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| | <p>Care Assess Senior Management Staff.</p> <p>Care Assess employees</p> <p>Care Assess Agents and Contractors (includes sub contractors and temporary contractors).</p> |
| References | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1- Aged Care Complaints Scheme – <i>Commonwealth HACC Complaints Guidelines for Service Providers –p3.</i> 2- Aged Care Complaints Scheme – <i>Commonwealth HACC Complaints Guidelines for Service Providers –p14</i> 3- Complaint Management Policy PD2006_73 – NSW Health |
| Related Policies | <p>Aged Care Complaints Scheme – <i>Commonwealth HACC Complaints Guidelines for Service Providers.</i></p> <p>VHC Guidelines</p> |

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Version: 2

Endorsed by:



Joe Towns
Chief Executive / Director

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